

Centre, Bristol ABC, Kate Sharpley Library , and Rebel Soul (Shambala Festival).

The Anarchist print co-op Sabcat have also produced two benefit T-shirts in support of the prisoners. They are printed on organic cotton, fair wear, carbon neutral, Earth Positive T-shirts and cost £14.95 including UK postage. Sabcat are donating their labour for free, so apart from the cost of the unprinted garment itself and the postage, all money raised goes to the antifascist prisoners support fund. To order a T-shirt check out the Sabcat website at www.sabcat.com.

Leeds ABC have produced a solidarity poster in several sizes, which is being displayed in laminated form in numerous community centres, social centres, pubs, cafes, bookshops, etc. Please contact us with regard to displaying one. You can also download the graphic to display on your website, Facebook page, etc.

Last, but by no means least, a number of revolutionary solidarity actions have been claimed in the names of the prisoners, and we both appreciate and applaud these acts. We should remember that the very best act of solidarity we can offer is to continue to fight against fascism and not to be intimidated or cowed by these latest attempts to stop us resisting.

Solidarity to the antifascist prisoners.

No Pasaran!

Leeds Anarchist Black Cross
October 2011

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ANTIFASCISM ON TRIAL

LEEDS ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS

When confronted by a swaggering neo-Nazi at Welling train station in March 2009, Sean Cregan did what any good antifascist would, he put the Nazi on his arse! While twice Sean's size, one punch was enough for the scumbag fascist, who dropped to the ground like a sack of potatoes. His neo-Nazi companion quickly fled down the station platform, with Sean in hot pursuit.



NOT AN ANTISOCIAL CRIME

The two scumbags had been on their way to a so-called "Blood and Honour" gig, which are regularly held at the nearby Duchess of Edinburgh pub (with the active participation of the fascist landlord with whom the two were to stay). When questioned by police later, the first fascist gave his name as Patrick O'Donovan (this may be a false name since he is German and came over specifically for the gig, which are illegal in Germany). His brave companion gave his name as Michael Heihl.

There had been several unrelated incidents at Welling station that evening, and the police arrived quickly, arresting several antifascists who were also at the station (or in the vicinity). Some months later, dawn raids took place around the country, with large numbers of cops smashing in doors and arresting other antifascists. Draconian bail conditions were imposed. In total, 23 people were now under arrest in relation to the punching of 'O'Donovan'.

Since there was no available 'complainant' in the case, the cops – the British Transport Police led by Detective Inspector Sam Blackburn – were unable to charge Sean, or any of the other antifascists, with assault. Instead they were charged with 'Conspiracy to Commit Violent Disorder'. In legal terms, 'Violent Disorder' occurs when a person's behaviour is deemed to be of such a nature that it would cause alarm or distress to someone witnessing it, though in this case nobody had complained and it was ruled that there was not sufficient evidence to additionally charge any of the antifascists with 'Violent Disorder' itself.

Charges were dropped against one of the antifascists, a young woman, in the early stages, but because of the sheer number of defendants the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) argued that, for logistical reasons, it was necessary to split the defendants between two trials. Of course this also put the Prosecution at a considerable advantage, particularly as they would be prosecuted by the same individual – Mark Trafford. Both trials would be held at Blackfriars Crown Court before Judge H.O.Blacksell.

The CPS chose to first prosecute not so much those with the most evidence against them, since they have presented no evidence of a conspiracy throughout, but those whom they judged would be most easily convicted. Many of the defendants had been convicted of political activities in the past, and because of these 'prior convictions' could not present character evidence in their defence for example. The CPS knew that they could rely on the



prejudice and ignorance of the jury (one of whom sported a shirt emblazoned with a large St George's cross) for some convictions, and sure enough seven antifascists were convicted as charged, with six of them being sent immediately to jail - for between 15 and 21 months.

As our comrades were sent to prison, the architects of the fit-up were busy congratulating each other. Blacksell, the judge who presided over the charade, said he would be recommending Detective Inspector Blackburn for a commendation – For what, making travel safer for Nazis?! Perhaps Blackburn will get the 'Iron Cross'! This whole case revolves around one neo-Nazi, who was not a complainant in the case, being put on his arse. For that 23 people were arrested, hundreds of cops were involved in dawn raids, and two show trials were held costing Millions, what a great service to the 'public'! But of course, this case is about far more than one pathetic fascist.

Immediately before the second trial, charges were dropped against two more of those previously accused of being involved in the 'conspiracy', leaving nine more to face trial. The trial began on Monday 12th September, and once again the Prosecution presented absolutely no evidence of a 'conspiracy'. The jury seemed nonplussed as to why they were there. Once again, the trial dragged on for more than three weeks.

One of the things that came out in the second trial was that a racist Immigration Officer, who acted as a prosecution witness, and who in his police statement described Ravi Gill as having a "typical big Asian head" and "speaking Indian", lied through his teeth in the first trial. He could not have witnessed the incident as he claimed because when it happened he was not actually there, but outside buying his ticket!

As his attempts to fit up the second group of antifascists began to unravel, Trafford became quite desperate, and at times appeared close to tears. He had pursued the case with personal malice and with a messianic gleam in his eye throughout, and his arrogance led to some verbal fencing with defendants of twice his intelligence which simply left him looking foolish. Bereft of evidence, he simply relied on being able to mislead and prejudice the jury as he had done in the first trial. To this end, Trafford tried to present the neo-Nazis of 'Blood & Honour' and the Anarchists and antifascists in the dock as two sides of the same coin, as if the Nazis and partisans of World War Two had some sort of moral equivalence. This morally repugnant position was rounded on by the Defence in the closing speeches with Trafford pilloried to an unusual extent. Putting the incident firmly in its political and historical context, one of the Defence barristers even went so far as to say that the jury should not only be acquitting the defendants, but thanking them for being prepared to confront organised fascism.

It should be clear that this prosecution was brought to try and smash antifascist resistance (something Trafford has privately made explicitly clear) and to intimidate antifascists from engaging in any form of antifascist activity. The case however, and the way that the

'conspiracy' law has been used in it, has huge implications for activists in general, it is an attempt to outlaw any form of protest. Leeds ABC regard it as highly regrettable that the case did not have the massive publicity it warranted from the very beginning.

The jury retired to consider the verdict at 3.00pm on Monday 3rd October – They were back again less than an hour later to acquit all nine antifascists, treating the prosecution case with the contempt it deserved. The courtroom erupted into cheers and cries of jubilation, with jury-members hugging and congratulating the antifascists, and asking them to keep up their good work. Only the judge and prosecutor were left looking sour-faced. Leeds ABC concluded our report at the time by saying: "Tonight as the acquitted and supporters retired to the pub there was every reason to celebrate. Tomorrow is the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street. We hope that you will join us in raising a glass – to our comrades who triumphed over this judicial fit-up, to the antifascists down the ages who have been prepared to go out onto the streets to confront fascism, and to our six comrades who were fitted-up earlier this year and who deserve our fullest possible support."

THE PRISONERS

The six antifascists imprisoned in the first trial were all originally held in Wormwood Scrubs prison in London, but 5 have now been moved to other jails in southern and central England. Please send them letters of support at the addresses given overleaf. If the prisoners are transferred again their updated addresses will be published on the Leeds ABC website. The prisoners may each receive postage stamps and Postal Orders (made payable to 'The Governor' and with the prisoner's name and prison number written on the back). For advice on writing to prisoners please see the Leeds ABC website.

A solidarity fund has been set up to support the prisoners in jail and upon release. All donations, big and small, are very welcome. The fund is administered by Leeds Anarchist Black Cross, a long-standing and reputable prisoner support organisation, and the fund will ONLY be used to support the prisoners directly. If you would like to contribute to the fund please send a cheque (made payable to 'The Cable Street Society') to Leeds ABC, 145-149 Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1LJ. Details for bank transfers are:

The Cable Street Society
Sort Code 070093
Account number 33333334
Ref 0827/704169523

We would like to thank the groups and individuals who have already contributed to the solidarity fund, including Antifa England, Brighton & Hove TUC Unemployed Workers

